DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 110 915 CG 010 182

TITLE Educational Opportunity Centers. Education Briefing Paper. A Media Service of the U.S. Office of Education.
INSTITUTION Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Aug 75
NOTE 6p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Disadvantaged Youth; *Educational Counseling; Federal Programs; Financial Support; Higher Education; Postsecondary Education; *Program Descriptions; Secondary Education; *Supplementary Educational Centers; *Vocational Counseling
IDENTIFIERS *Educational Opportunity Centers

ABSTRACT

This briefing paper describes a new U.S. Office of Education program--the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC). The services available through this program include professional counseling, information on student financial aid and advice on academic and career possibilities. Authorized under the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Educational Opportunity Centers focus educational services upon certain geographical areas that have major concentrations of low-income or disadvantaged persons. The Centers coordinate a variety of available educational resources in one place, making it possible to help a larger number of persons. The report lists the 12 Centers, describes who can benefit from the facilities and services, and delineates the services provided at three of the Centers. (Author)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

CG

Education Briefing Paper

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

A media service of the
U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION
T. H. Bell, *Commissioner*

AUGUST 1975

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

Once the football games, study halls, and proms are but pleasant memories, high school graduates of the 1970's are faced with the fundamental decision that has perplexed generations of young people: What to do after graduation?

Today a myriad of academic and career choices await the graduates. Some may choose to attend a traditional college or university; others may opt for an area community college. Those graduates who are dissatisfied with classroom study may decide to gain vocational skills via a technical or trade school or to seek full-time employment immediately after graduation in a variety of unskilled or semi-skilled occupations.

This period of transition is often confusing, even frightening. Many young men and women are still uncertain of themselves and of what their future goals should be. Many rely on the advice of friends, teachers, or parents, who may be equally as confused or are simply unaware of the opportunities open to today's youth. Without proper guidance or advice, students can make hasty or uninformed decisions they regret later.

Now, however, it is possible to receive professional counseling, information on student financial aid, and advice on academic and career possibilities through a new U.S. Office of Education program -- the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC).

Authorized under the Education Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92-318), the EOCs focus educational services upon certain geographic areas that have major concentrations of low-income or disadvantaged persons. The Centers coordinate a variety of available educational resources in one place, making it possible to help a larger number of persons. Here OE and other Federal programs can be integrated with private and public educational agencies that have common goals.

WHERE THEY ARE

Grants for Fiscal Year 1976, totaling $3 million, have been awarded to 12 EOCs across the country. The Centers are located in:

Huntsville, Alabama	Los Angeles
Denver	Washington, D.C.
Hudson County, New Jersey	Espanola, New Mexico
New York City	Dayton, Ohio
Boston	St. Louis
Dallas	Tacoma, Washington

Six of the centers serve students in urban areas, two serve areas that have both rural and urban characteristics, two are in primarily rural areas, and two others are in metropolitan areas.

Locations for the Centers were selected on a competitive basis from proposals submitted by institutions of higher education, public and private organizations (including professional and scholarly organizations), and, in some cases, high schools and secondary vocational schools.

Grants are awarded on a one-year basis and the Federal government pays up to 75 percent of the authorized cost of operation. Each Center is staffed by trained counselors, tutors, and/or recruiters who are familiar with the many services offered by educational and vocational institutions in the area as well as by private and government agencies.

WHO CAN BENEFIT?

Though intended primarily to provide assistance to youths in areas with major concentrations of low-income population, the facilities and services of the Centers are open to all persons in the community.

The EOCs direct their services to three major groups: the high school student or recent high school graduate; the student already enrolled in a postsecondary institution or program; and the area colleges and universities.

Services provided to high school students are mainly focused on academic and career counseling and admissions assistance. Members of the staff help prospective postsecondary students prepare application forms for financial aid and refer persons with non-educational problems to other public and private social service agencies.

For persons already enrolled in a postsecondary institution or program, the Center's staff provides tutorial or remedial help when necessary. Counseling services are also available and students are encouraged to drop in for follow-up sessions.

Area postsecondary institutions also benefit from the Center's services. For example, the Center helps coordinate the recruiting and admissions efforts of area colleges. It helps identify the special needs of low-income students and encourages the schools, as well as the existing public and private programs for the disadvantaged, to meet those concerns. In addition, the EOCs act as a clearinghouse for information and literature on techniques and programs effective for students from educationally deprived backgrounds. In its first year of operation, over 85 institutions took part in the educational activities of the EOCs.

OTHER OE AIDS

Another aspect of the Educational Opportunity Centers is to coordinate other education-related programs within the community. Foremost among these are OE's Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Special Services for the Disadvantaged, often called the Trio programs. These programs encompass a total concept of providing necessary educational services and activities to students with financial or cultural need, including those with limited English-speaking ability, the physically disabled, and veterans.

The Talent Search program, begun in 1966 as a recruitment device for student financial aid programs, identifies qualified youths with low-income or minority backgrounds and encourages them to finish high school and to pursue postsecondary educational training.

Upward Bound, also established in 1966, runs an intensified academic program to help high school students get ready for college. Students live and study during the summer on college campuses and continue participating in the program into the academic year when they are back at school.

Special Services for the Disadvantaged began in 1970 to provide remedial and other special services for students in higher education who show academic potential.

EXAMPLES

Within the general framework of the program, each EOC has developed its own methods to serve the needs of the clientele in its communities:

Missouri. The Metropolitan St. Louis Educational Opportunity Center is divided into nine satellite centers scattered throughout the area. Each has one professional counselor, one "streetworker," and two or three student helpers.

The counselors relying on personal contact as one of their most important techniques help the students decide on their vocational or academic goals and how to achieve them. Once a student has been placed in a program, he or she is always free to return to the Center for follow-up counseling, tutorial help, or just to chat.

The job of the "streetworkers" is to seek out the youths on their own grounds -- in poolhalls, in community youth centers, or on streetcorners. This is one advantage of the satellite center. The student can be reached on his own terms, in his own neighborhood.

Of the 3,000 students who have been contacted and/or counseled at the Center in its first 9 months, nearly 600 have been able to further their educational plans. Half of these have applied to 2- or 4-year institutions and to proprietary schools and the others have passed or are preparing to take the G.E.D. (General Education Development) or high school equivalency test.

The St. Louis EOC is backed by the Higher Education Coordinating Council, a committee composed of the presidents of area colleges and universities. This interaction between the council and the Center aids in the placement and admissions of disadvantaged students.

The Center sees it strongest points in its effective outreach counseling and warm, dedicated professional staff. As its director acknowledges, "We know it's a product we can sell."

Texas. The North Texas Educational Opportunity Center, sponsored by the Dallas County Community College District, incorporates six satellite centers serving 16 counties. This 100-mile area includes 11 community colleges, 12 colleges and universities, and numerous community service groups.

To help cope with the number of students and institutions involved, the Center is establishing a computer network linking the main EOC office with each satellite center. The computer is already programed with information on various area social service agencies and programs, such as those for senior citizens or child care services. Information on area educational opportunities will be programed into the computer. A guide to show students enrolled in community colleges where they can transfer within the State with a minimum of credit hour loss will also be available.

The Center also employs a successful referral system that keeps a running inventory of a student's academic background and the services received.

Much of the success of the North Texas EOC has been a result of cooperation from the surrounding community. For example, a manpower agency loaned one satellite center a full-time recruiter and as part of a class project, sociology majors are doing volunteer work at the Center.

In addition, the Department of Probation automatically refers parolees for academic and vocational guidance. And the area school systems refer the names of drop-outs and absentees so that these students may be reached for counseling by the Center's staff.

California. The project operated by the University of California at Los Angeles tries to reach the diverse cultural groups found in southern California -- Chicanos, Indians, and Asians as well as blacks and whites. The centers, one in downtown Los Angeles and one in nearby Venice, were formed to make the EOC's services more easily accessible. In addition, two mobile vans roam the Los Angeles County area, handing out brochures and bringing services to the outlying areas.

To inform the community of the services it provides, the Center's staff addresses various community groups, operates information booths in public libraries, advertises on the radio, and holds open houses.

In return, community response has been positive. Los Angeles City College has donated two paraprofessional counselors and Loyola Marymount University, 10 tutors to work at the Center; also, the Veteran's Administration has sent two counselors to work with the veterans contacted by the Center. The Los Angeles Consortium, a group composed of 2- and 4-year colleges, is preparing a joint admissions form to serve students referred by the Center.

The Center stresses personalized involvement with its clientele. Since it concentrates on helping persons who live and work in the community, it is able to provide useful follow-up programs whenever needed. It is this interest in the students that may give them the psychological boost needed to turn a failure into a success.

The following projects are currently being funded under the Educational Opportunity Centers program:

Alabama	North Alabama Educational Opportunity Center, Huntsville	$250,000
California	University of California Los Angeles Extension	282,000
Colorado	Denver Metropolitan Educational Opportunity Center	250,000
District of Columbia	Mission - Moton Educational Opportunity Center	300,000
Massachusetts	Executive Office of Educational Affairs, Boston	325,000
Missouri	Metropolitan St. Louis Education Opportunity Center	325,000
New Jersey	Educational Opportunity Center, Hudson County, Jersey City	250,000
New Mexico	New Mexico Technical-Vocational Institute, Espanola	150,000
New York	City University of New York Computer-Based Educational Opportunity Center, New York City	300,000
Ohio	Dayton-Miami Valley Consortium	154,000
Texas	Dallas County Community College District	250,000
Washington	Educational Opportunity and Resource Center, Tacoma	164,000

† † †

For further information:

Educational Opportunity Centers Program
Bureau of Postsecondary Education
U.S. Office of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Telephone: 202/245-2359